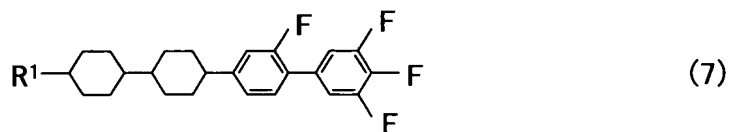
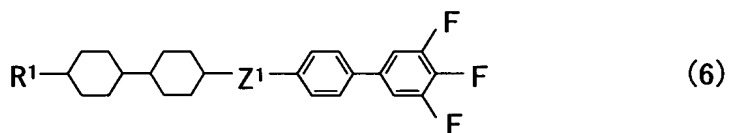
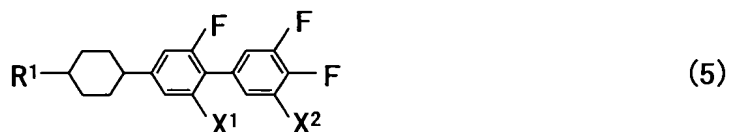
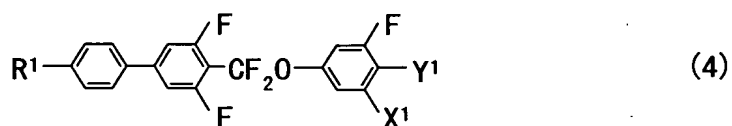
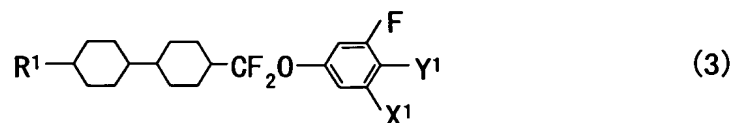
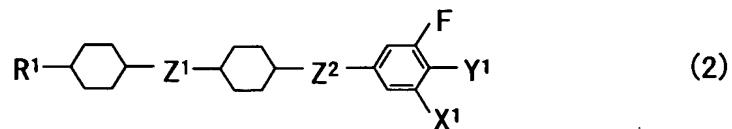
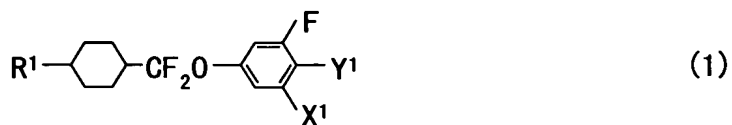


What is claimed is:

1.           A liquid crystal composition comprising at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by  
5       formula (1) as a first component, at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (2) and (3) as a second component, at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (4) and (5) as a  
10       third component and at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (6) and (7) as a fourth component:

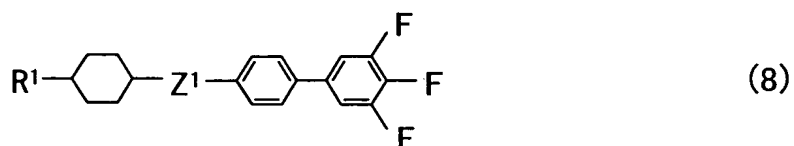


wherein,  $\text{R}^1$  represents alkyl;  $\text{Z}^1$  and  $\text{Z}^2$  each independently represent a single bond or  $-(\text{CH}_2)_2-$ ;  $\text{X}^1$  and  $\text{X}^2$  each independently represent hydrogen or fluorine; and  $\text{Y}^1$  represents fluorine or  $-\text{OCF}_3$ .

2. The liquid crystal composition described in claim 1 which contains from 3 to 20% by weight of the first component, from 40 to 80% by weight of the second component,

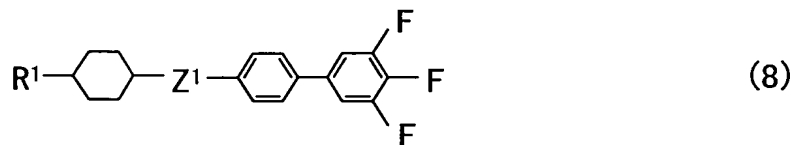
from 3 to 30% by weight of the third component and from 5 to 30% by weight of the fourth component, each based on the total weight of the composition.

- 5        3.        The liquid crystal composition described in claim 1 which further comprises at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (8) as a fifth component:



- 10       wherein R<sup>1</sup> represents alkyl; and Z<sup>1</sup> represents a single bond or -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>-.

- 15       4.        The liquid crystal composition described in claim 2 which further comprises at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (8) as a fifth component:



wherein R<sup>1</sup> represents alkyl; and Z<sup>1</sup> represents a single bond or -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>-.

5.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 3 which contains from 3 to 15% by weight of the fifth component, based on the total weight of the composition.

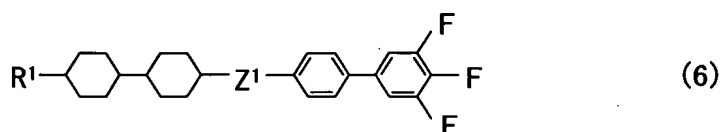
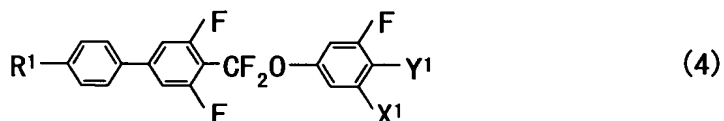
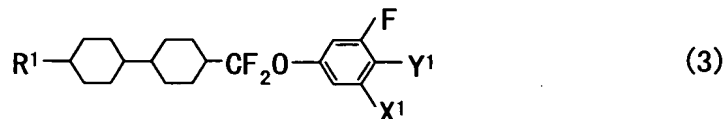
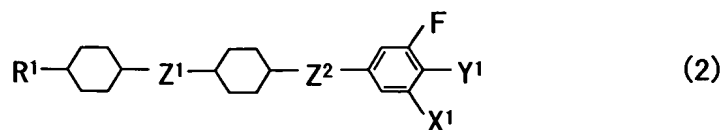
5       6.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 4 which contains from 3 to 15% by weight of the fifth component, based on the total weight of the composition.

7.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 2, which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

8.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 5, which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

15       9.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 6, which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

10.          A liquid crystal composition comprising at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (2), at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (3), at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (4) and at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (6):



wherein,  $R^1$  represents alkyl,  $Z^1$  and  $Z^2$  each independently represents a single bond or  $-(\text{CH}_2)_2-$ ,  $X^1$  represents hydrogen or fluorine, and  $Y^1$  represents fluorine or  $-\text{OCF}_3$ .

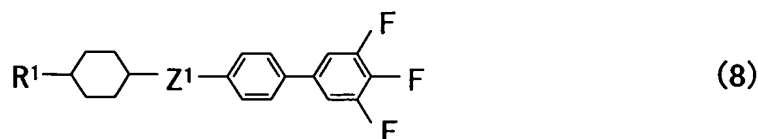
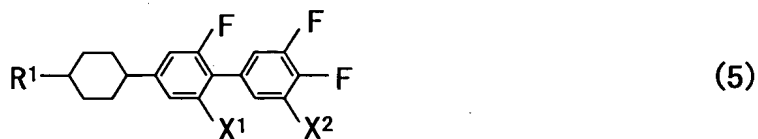
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11. The liquid crystal composition described in claim 10 which contains from 20 to 70% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (2), from 10 to 40% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (3), from 3 to 30% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (4) and from 5 to 30% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formula (6), each based on the total weight of the composition.

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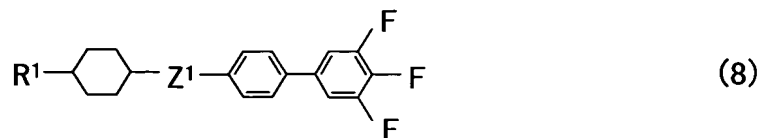
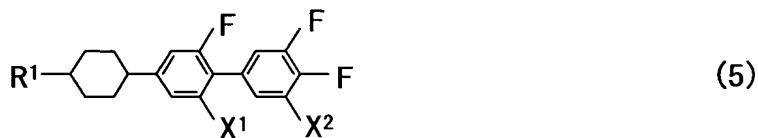
12. The liquid crystal composition described in claim 10 which further contains at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (5) and (8):



5

wherein, R¹ represents alkyl, Z¹ represents a single bond or -(CH₂)₂-, and X¹ and X² each independently represent hydrogen or fluorine.

10 13. The liquid crystal composition described in claim 11 which further contains at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (5) and (8):



15 wherein, R¹ represents alkyl, Z¹ represents a single bond or -(CH₂)₂-, and X¹ and X² each independently represent hydrogen or fluorine.

14.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 12 which contains from 3 to 25% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (5) and (8), based on the total weight of the composition.

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15.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 13 which contains from 3 to 25% by weight of at least one compound selected from the compounds represented by formulas (5) and (8), based on the total weight of the composition.

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16.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 11 which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

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17.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 14 which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

18.           The liquid crystal composition described in claim 15 which has an optical anisotropy of 0.08 to 0.12.

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19.           A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 1.

20.           A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 2.

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21.           A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 3.

22. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 4.

5 23. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 5.

24. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 6.

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25. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 7.

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26. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 8.

27. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 9.

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28. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 10.

29. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 11.

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30. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 12.



31. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 13.

5 32. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 14.

33. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 15.

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34. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 16.

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35. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 17.

36. A liquid crystal display element comprising the liquid crystal composition described in claim 18.